



IAST

CONNECT #12

Spring 2018

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN TOULOUSE



JUDGMENT:
DECISIONS,
PRISONS AND
MORALITY

IAST is at the forefront of a scientific revolution

"No man is an island, entire of itself. Each is a piece of the continent, a part of the main."

These words by John Donne almost 400 years ago are becoming even more true nowadays. We live in an increasingly connected, complex, and heterogeneous world where something that is happening in one of its parts can dramatically affect everyday life in other parts.

To make our world better or, at least, avoid making it worse, we need to understand how social institutions and societies emerge, function, and break down; what role actions and individual beliefs play in these processes; and what factors motivate and control human behavior and their changing preferences.

These are clearly enormously challenging scientific and also practical problems. Traditional scientific approaches to these topics are very discipline-limited. Anthropologists, historians, psychologists, political scientists, and economists often study very similar processes and patterns without ever talking to each other. In contrast, modern scientific approaches are becoming increasingly trans-disciplinary.

This is because more and more people realize that true understanding of complex processes requires collaboration of researchers and practitioners with a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and technical tools. Also important is the diversity of scientists and practitioners themselves (cultural, ethnic, gender, etc) as there are no universal standards of human social behavior or social institutions

and because (subconscious) personal biases may often affect important scientific interpretations and conclusions.

It is very exciting to see IAST at the forefront of these transformative changes in the way science is done.



Sergey Gavrilets,
University of Tennessee,
Member of the IAST
Scientific Council

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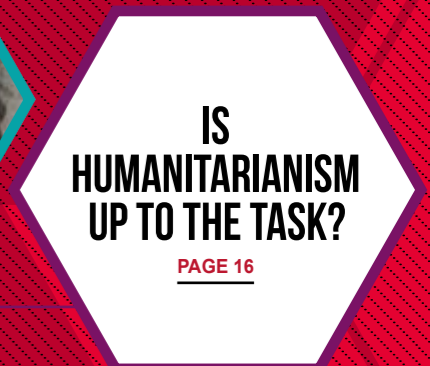
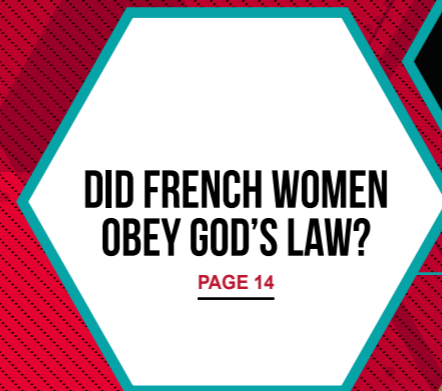
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• Production manager: Carolyne Lamy
• Editorial contributions: James Nash
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FLASHBACK TO RECENT EVENTS

IAST
in action

FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN TOULOUSE PRESENTS

3 PUBLIC TALKS ON JUDGMENT

ELДАР ШАФИР (PRINCETON UNIVERSITY) SEPTEMBER 28, 2017
НИКОЛА ЛЕЙСИ (LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS) NOVEMBER 16, 2017
СУЗАННАХ ЛИПСКОМБ (NEW COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES) DECEMBER 7, 2017

LECTURES IN ENGLISH OPEN TO ALL

18:00 → 19:30
 Université Toulouse 1 Capitole
 2 rue des Puits-Creusés, 31000, Toulouse
 WWW.IAST.FR/DL

DISTINGUISHED LECTURES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

2017 DISTINGUISHED LECTURES

- | | | |
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| <p>SEPTEMBER 28
 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE 1
 Eldar Shafir (Princeton University) on 'Intuitive Judgment in Public Policy'</p> | <p>NOVEMBER 16
 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE 2
 Nicola Lacey (London School of Economics) on 'The Gender of Crime'</p> | <p>DECEMBER 7
 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE 3
 Suzannah Lipscomb (University of Roehampton) on 'Passing God's Judgment: The Reformed Church and Women in Sixteenth-Century Languedoc'</p> |
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ORIGINS OF MUSIC

DECEMBER 14

ANTHROPOLOGY

A workshop to explore the origins of music and its effects on human behavior through time.

CORPORATE LAW AND ECONOMIC THEORY

DECEMBER 8

ECONOMIC THEORY

A conference jointly organized by the University of Pennsylvania, Institute for Law and Economics, TSE and IAST, discussed the implications and limitations of the prevailing law and economics approach in the analysis of corporate law institutions.

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

DECEMBER 18

PSYCHOLOGY

Manfred Milinski (Max Planck Institute, Plön) came to IAST to discuss how humans choose representatives who enforce cooperation in social dilemmas through extortion.



SOCIAL IDENTITY

MARCH 26

POLITICAL SCIENCE

IAST's fifth Political Science & Political Economy conference discussed how the interplay between social identities and political organization shapes politics and policies.

IAST
IN THE PRESS



CONFLICT AND CO-OPERATION: A HISTORY OF TRADE

BBC RADIO - PAUL SEABRIGHT

HISTORY

BBC Radio broadcast a 10-episode series with IAST director Paul Seabright, exploring our trading story, from the earliest exchange networks in child-care and food, right up to the modern day.

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09lt2tr

BOLIVIA'S TSIMANE PEOPLE HAVE THE HEALTHIEST ARTERIES ON EARTH

THE GUARDIAN
 THE NEW YORK TIMES
 TIME MAGAZINE
 JONATHAN STIEGLITZ

ANTHROPOLOGY

A study published in the Lancet medical journal last year by IAST anthropology program director **Jonathan Stieglitz** attracted global media coverage, with articles appearing in newspapers such as The Guardian, The New York Times and TIME magazine. Working with a team of cardiologists and other anthropologists, Jonathan's research shows that the Tsimane people of the Bolivian Amazon have the healthiest hearts in the world. The study suggests that further research into the Tsimane's pre-industrial lifestyle may be crucial in reducing heart disease, which is the biggest killer in more sedentary populations such as the US and Europe.

RESEARCHERS UNLOCK KEY TO ROBOT-HUMAN COOPERATION

NATURE COMMUNICATIONS
 JEAN-FRANÇOIS BONNEFON

PSYCHOLOGY

Can machines learn to imitate human cooperation? **Jean-François Bonnefon** (IAST) and his co-authors published an article in Nature Communications about a new algorithm to improve AI interactions. They tested dozens of algorithms in multiple contexts, and realized it was very difficult for machines to quickly learn to cooperate in a new situation. Things changed when the team developed a new algorithm: one that could talk. Speaking not only helps human-machine cooperation: machines cooperate better and faster with each other when they, too, can discuss their intentions, feelings and emotions.



Is music a universal language?

• LUKE GLOWACKI •
CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH ON SONG

Working with his former colleagues at Harvard, IAST anthropologist Luke Glowacki is conducting a systematic investigation of the world's vocal music. In a new paper, his team find that people can correctly identify dance songs, lullabies and healing songs, regardless of the music's cultural origin, and after hearing clips for only 14 seconds.

The Natural History of Song project, which Luke co-directs with psychologist Samuel Mehr and evolutionary biologist Manvir Singh, has collected and coded ethnographic text and audio recordings from all over the world to investigate fundamental questions about the universality of music.

"What sorts of songs appear regularly across human cultures?" asks Luke. "Anthropologists have observed lullabies, dances, and religious music in many societies, but we don't yet know what other core domains of human song exist — or whether a set of core domains exists at all. A key roadblock has been the lack of systematic, cross-cultural information about music."

The researchers believe they have begun to clear the roadblock. By coding nearly 5,000 descriptions of songs, lyrics and song performances from 60 human societies into 50 variables — including the demographics of singers and audience members, the time of day and duration of singing, the presence of instruments, objects, and costumes — Luke's team hope to determine the behavioral and social structure of vocal music.

SOUND OF MUSIC

The researchers also want to analyze the underlying acoustical and musical structure of the world's songs. "Psychologists



have observed that songs for babies tend to share some features, like the slow tempi and falling melodic contours of lullabies," says Luke. "But we don't know whether those features turn up reliably worldwide — or what sounds define other song domains."

"What sorts of songs appear regularly across cultures? A key roadblock has been the lack of systematic, cross-cultural information"

With analyses of 118 field recordings from around the world, the Natural History of Song is a public resource that will help to answer these questions. "We selected recordings by reviewing published collections of world music, digitizing out-of-print recordings, and contacting anthropologists and ethnomusicologists," says Luke. "A team of expert musicians listened to each song while reading the transcriptions and coded the song into 40 variables. For instance, they indicated the song's tempo, instrumentation, melodic contour, and whether the song has a clear tonal center."

FORM AND FUNCTION

For their 2018 *Current Biology* paper 'Form and Function in Human Song', Luke's team asked 750 internet users in 60 countries to listen to brief excerpts of songs from 86 predominantly small-scale societies, including hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, and subsistence farmers.

Participants then rated each song on a six-point scale according to whether they believed it was used for dancing, soothing a baby, healing, or expressing love. Two other options — mourning the dead and telling a story — were added as controls.

In total, participants listened to more than 26,000 excerpts and provided more than 150,000 ratings (six per song). Despite participants' unfamiliarity with the cultures, the random sampling of each song, their short duration and the enormous diversity of this music, people were able to reliably infer the songs' functions for healing, dancing, and soothing a baby, and their ratings were consistent across the globe.

COMPARING NOTES

To explore how people were able to determine song function, the team conducted a follow-up experiment in which they asked 1,000 internet users in the United States and India to rate songs for contextual and musical features, ranging from the number and gender of the singers to tempo and melodic complexity.

Analysis of the data showed some relationship between such features and the previous experiment's ratings for song function. In particular, dance songs were perceived as faster, more complex, 'happier' and 'more exciting' than lullabies. "Musical features and the songs' actual functions explained unique variance in function ratings," says Luke. "These



findings are consistent with the existence of universal links between form and function in vocal music."

ACROSS BOUNDARIES

An important weakness of the study is that the listeners were all English-speaking internet users with some degree of exposure to Western music. To counter this, Luke and his colleagues are now translating their tests into other languages and repeating them with listeners from isolated, small-scale societies who have never heard music from other cultures, in addition to expanding their discography of songs to include more social functions and a wider range of human societies.

By deepening their investigations into the evolution of song and its ability to cross cultural boundaries, Luke's team hope to

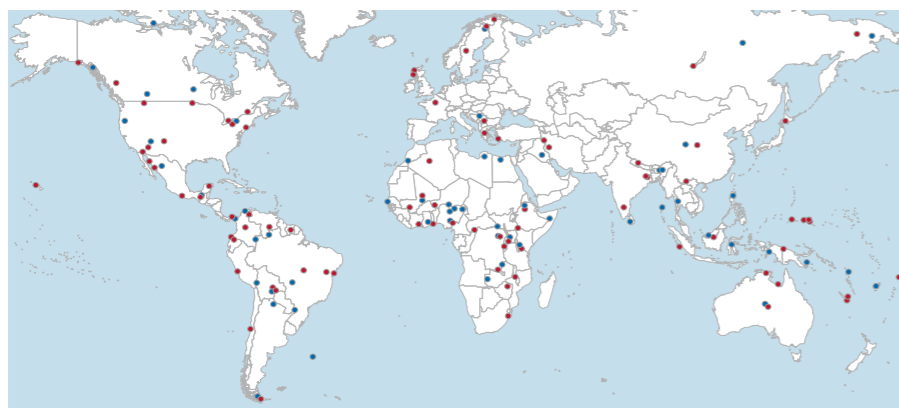
lay the foundations for a new science of music. "Eventually we aim to create a modular, open-access platform where scholars can collaboratively annotate and expand the *Natural History of Song*," says Luke, "and where anyone can rigorously test many other ideas about music."

FIND OUT MORE

Luke researches collective behavior, aggression, and the emergence of institutions in modern humans. He uses ethnographic fieldwork, quantitative methods, and experimental paradigms in small-scale populations. Last year, he was awarded the IAST multidisciplinary prize in support of his project with IAST biologist Alice Baniël to study male-female aggression in mammals and humans.

Read Luke's research at www.iast.fr.

JOIN THE DOTS



Map indicates the locations of cultures in the Natural History of Song (NHS) project. Cultures represented in NHS Ethnography (containing 5,000 descriptions of songs and song performances from 60 human societies) are shown in blue; cultures in NHS Discography (transcriptions and analyses of 118 field recordings) are shown in red.

PERFECT HARMONY

IAST has begun a joint initiative with the Fondation Royaumont to develop research into music and its relation to human societies, bringing together experts in music and its history and prehistory, as well as anthropologists and economic historians. The first workshop, on the origins of music in non-state societies, was held in December.

Decisions, prisons and morality

The judgments we make, as individuals and societies, determine our future. They also raise fundamental questions that crisscross the social sciences. As part of its core commitment to explore issues that transcend disciplinary boundaries, IAST invited three international experts in behavioral psychology, law and history to join its Distinguished Lecture series on Judgment last year. In the following pages, they explain some of the ideas behind their public talks on decision-making, crime and punishment.

P10-11..... **THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SCARCITY**
Eldar Shafir – Why do we make bad decisions?

P12-13..... **WHY ARE US PRISONS OVERFLOWING?**
Nicola Lacey – Crime, punishment and segregation

P14-15..... **PASSING GOD'S JUDGMENT**
Suzannah Lipscomb – Sexual sin in 16th-century France



The psychology of scarcity

• ELДАР SHAFIR • WHY DO WE MAKE BAD DECISIONS?

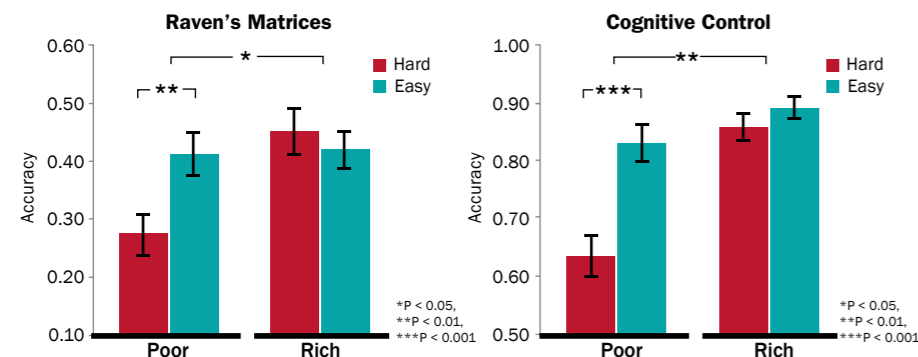
Recently placed in the top 100 leading global thinkers, Princeton's Eldar Shafir was asked by former president Barack Obama to use behavioral economics as part of a committee to help ordinary Americans. Following his IAST Distinguished Lecture in September, he spoke to us about how to improve decisions for everyone, from the poor to the policymakers.

Are people poor because they are less capable? Or are they less capable because they are poor?

This question has been at the core of the social sciences for a long time. Our work falls clearly on the latter side - it finds that poverty can overwhelm our thinking: in a context of

"Every mistake for the poor is a lot more costly. Forgetting to pay the parking meter is an annoyance to the rich, but it could mean a whole different week if you're poor."

POOR THINKING



For Eldar's 2013 paper 'Poverty Impedes Cognitive Function', shoppers at a New Jersey mall were presented with hypothetical financial problems. For example: "Your car requires \$X to be fixed. You can pay in full, take a loan, or take a chance and forego the service..." While thinking about the problem, participants performed tasks used to measure cognitive function: Raven's Matrices and a spatial compatibility task. When worried about the "easy" scenarios, designed to generate trivial concerns, the poor and rich performed similarly. In the "hard" scenarios, the poor performed significantly worse.



scarcity, a fully capable person loses some cognitive capacity. It suggests we ought to think about how society can restore the bandwidth and thus the inherent capacity of people who happen to be poor by making life a bit easier.

Do the poor make poor decisions?

In some domains, they make better decisions than the rest of us. In areas which they attend to very carefully, like managing limited funds, they do very well. But a lot of things are happening on the periphery that they fail to consider. Any of us who focuses heavily on one thing will make a lot mistakes elsewhere. The poor make mistakes

partly because they get less help. If I was not assisted by my accountant, lawyer, doctor, and bank, I would do a lot worse. And, of course, every mistake for the poor is a lot more costly. Forgetting to pay the parking meter is an annoyance to the rich, but it could mean a whole different week if you're poor.

Your research suggests that 'feeling poor' lowers your IQ. Is it more helpful to change the way we feel or to change how much we have?

It's not just some subjective feeling, it's your ability to focus and do things. And it goes hand-in-hand with what you don't have, if what you don't have distracts you and makes you less able. Probably the biggest advantage of being rich - while it's not clear it makes you much happier - are all the things you don't have to worry about, at least with great urgency.

How might we expand our bandwidth?

Our bandwidth is very limited. Multitasking is often another way of not paying attention to

something. We can't do very much at any one time. The most you can do is to increase your efficiency, your automaticity. When you're a novice driver, it's very hard to do anything else. Once the driving has become automatic, most of your bandwidth is now available for other things.

What can we do to escape the biases that cloud our judgment?

Some biases yield objective mistakes that if you notice, you can correct. A lot of biases we talk about occur when slightly different contexts lead you to do things differently, but they are very hard to detect. You cannot be immune to many of these biases, but you can be sensitive to the fact that you might be prone to be influenced by them. Ask yourself, 'Am I rushing to judgment?'

I haven't been able to change a lot in my life, apart from nuances here and there. But I've acquired a sense that humans are slightly comical - especially when we think we have complete control - in that we're prone to influences that we don't appreciate.

"If you want something done, ask a busy person." Is there any truth to this?

If the busy person focuses on the thing you gave them, they will do it very well. But if it gets relegated to the periphery, good luck to you. The busy person and the poor person do some things extremely well, and other things are discounted and neglected and left for another time.

Why should policymakers listen to behavioral scientists?

They need to understand the people they're trying to help. And for policymakers themselves, our work shows it's good to acquire



some modesty, especially when we are busy and distracted yet having a big impact. We're not always driven by what we think drives us. Just knowing that makes you pause, reconsider, consult others...

How can behavioral science help counter racial bias and other prejudice?

Attitudes that are inherent to our immediate responses, within milliseconds, obviously come from somewhere that is beyond our immediate control. Societal stereotypes and immediate reflexive responses are much harder to get to via simple education. You have to change societal norms, the associations between different aspects of stereotypes. It's a long-term project and not an easy one.

What ethical concerns do you have about nudge units that train governments to influence behavior?

The food we sell, the finances we create, the architecture we employ... all of it influences people. And there's no way around it. You hope that knowledge will be used by people

who mean to do good. If it's used to do bad, that's very unfortunate but I have no idea how we can avoid that issue. I thought it was wonderful when Kurt Vonnegut suggested that every student sign a Hippocratic oath.

Barack Obama recently told Microsoft there's never been a better time to be alive. Do you share his optimism?

No, I don't. I mean, it's true, some of us are living exceedingly well. And in some areas, we've made some progress, especially on abject poverty. But there is alarm in the air because of our political leaders, the sentiments of voters and the stressors of inequality. There's a sense that we are losing our minds: the adults are not running the world very well and the young are getting stressed when they see this.

FIND OUT MORE

Co-authored with economist Sendhil Mullainathan, *Scarcity: Why Having Too Little Means So Much* (2013) is an intriguing introduction to Eldar's research.

Why are **US PRISONS** overflowing?

• **NICOLA LACEY** •
CRIME, PUNISHMENT AND DEMOCRACY

Why does the US put so many people in prison? Speaking to IAST researchers after her Distinguished Lecture on 'The Gender of Crime' in November, LSE legal scholar Nicola Lacey drew on her recent work with political economist David Soskice to argue that America's soaring imprisonment rates are paradoxically fueled by the strength of local democracy in key policy areas, itself entrenched by and exacerbating chronic poverty, educational inequality and residential segregation.



past the post-political systems, have seen quite a substantial rise in imprisonment."

"If you took all the African-Americans and Hispanics out of the US population, its imprisonment rate would still be more than double that of the UK"

Most developed countries experienced a substantial upswing in crime in the 1970s and 1980s, but they reacted with very different approaches to imprisonment. In her book *The Prisoners' Dilemma* (2008), Nicola applied the tools of comparative political economy to attempt to find an answer.

"The coordinated market economies of northern Europe, and particularly the Nordic area, with much more consensus-oriented political systems, managed to sustain a lot of stability and moderation regarding penal policy. Proportional representation seems to have helped in that context," she observes. "But the liberal market economies such as Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the US and most of Canada, which have more adversarial, 'first

France appears to be an interesting hybrid, somewhere between the more cohesive Nordic polities and the more individualistic, market-oriented and competitive Anglo-Saxons.

EXTREME OUTCOMES

The real challenge, however, is to explain why the US is so different, even compare to the other liberal market economies, which have faced similar macro-technological transformations, namely the collapse of Fordism in the 1970s and 1980s and the subsequent development of knowledge economies. *"Going back to at least the beginning of the 20th century, the US has always had relatively high levels of serious violence, particularly homicide. In the 1950s, the US imprisonment rate was about double that of England and Wales. But by 2005, it was about five times as high."*

Can this be explained as some peculiarity about homicidal crime and punishment? *"No, because there are all sorts of other policy-driven social outcomes in which the US has exceptionally bad or extreme outcomes compared to other advanced democracies: high levels of child poverty; low literacy at the bottom end; high degrees of residential segregation by wealth and race... On all these sorts of score, the US does uniquely badly among advanced democracies."*

RACIAL INEQUALITY

From Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* to Ava DuVernay's Oscar-nominated documentary *13th*, the role of mass incarceration in perpetuating racial inequality is becoming more widely explored. But Nicola argues that race on its own is not enough to explain the US anomaly.

"In New Zealand, the overrepresentation of Maori in prisons is higher than the overrepresentation of African-Americans in the US. There is obviously institutional racism in the US criminal justice system, as there is in the UK. But if you took all the African-Americans and Hispanics out of the US population, its imprisonment rate would still be more than double that of the UK. Race coexists with and magnifies other forms of disadvantage, as the sociologist William Julius Wilson has shown, but there's something else going on."

"The basic problem in the US is paradoxically what Alexis de Tocqueville celebrated about America: the power of local democracy"

LOCAL VOTERS

To explain America's outsized prison population, Nicola and David instead point the finger at its extraordinarily decentralized political institutions. "America is decentralized through its federal and state systems, but also at the local level. Cities and counties have enormous policymaking power. Americans elect everything: politicians, school boards, county commissions, police chiefs and, often, judges... you name it.

You might think that's great for public accountability, but local election turnout tends to



be very low, and those who do vote tend to be more privileged. Homeowners are more motivated to vote, with interests that do not coincide with those of the disadvantaged. They vote to retain property value, good schools, law enforcement, cleanliness, etc, in their local area."

This dynamic is entrenched by local-level zoning powers. *"Local control over land use maintains the extraordinary residential segregation in the US. In NZ or Australia, which have extremely disadvantaged ethnic minority populations, you have nothing like the same level of segregation. The US combination of segregation and strong local government is very hard to shift."*

POLICY LEVERS

The trajectory of imprisonment rates in Europe has held relatively steady over the past 20 years, and crime is going down in most countries. But Nicola sees no easy solution to mass incarceration in the US. *"Sometimes, we can get at a policy issue with a very different policy lever. The Obama administration used its limited federal powers very*

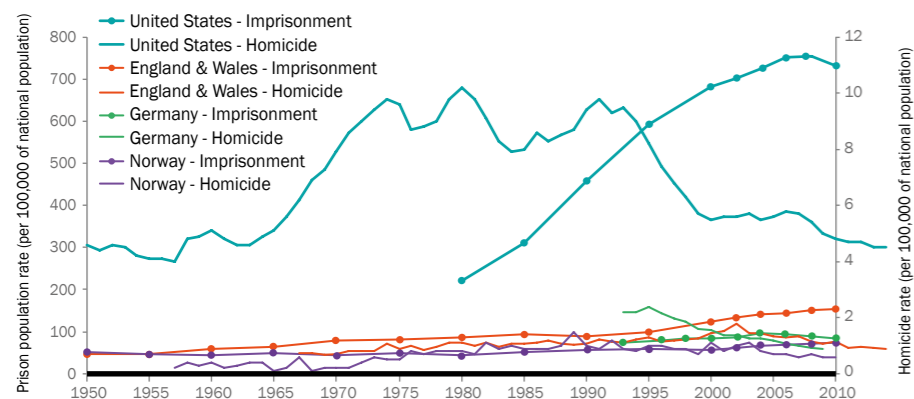
intelligently for the Affordable Care Act, and that kind of thing can make a difference. In the UK, one of the things that had the biggest effect on the gender pay gap, the alleviation of poverty among women and the crime rate, was the Blair government's introduction of the minimum wage."

Changing the demographic, increasing voting turnout by the young and the poor could also make a big difference, Nicola suggests. *"The basic problem in the US is paradoxically what the French diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville celebrated about America: the power of local democracy. It's not that there's something essentially wrong with local democracy – it's about the way it works in the context of American racial and economic history and the shock of deindustrialization."*

FIND OUT MORE

Read Nicola's paper, co-authored with David Soskice, 'Crime, punishment and segregation in the United States: The paradox of local democracy', in *Punishment & Society* (2015) Vol. 17(4).

THE AMERICAN EXCEPTION



Imprisonment and homicide trends in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Norway, 1950–2010. Source: Birkel & Dern (2012); Bundeskriminalamt, Police Crime Statistics; FBI 2017; United Kingdom Office for National Statistics; von Hofer et al. (2012); Data from Prison Brief, Institute for Criminal Policy Research

SEXUAL SIN and the law of God

• SUZANNAH LIPSCOMB • MORALITY POLICE IN 16TH-CENTURY FRANCE

Protestant church records in early modern France reveal vivid tales of marital quarrels, illegitimate pregnancies, rape, fights and malicious gossip, says historian and TV presenter Suzannah Lipscomb. In her IAST Distinguished Lecture in December, she argued that the church's diligence in enforcing a strict moral code offers a window onto the courageous and vocal struggle of everyday women against the patriarchal powers of 16th-century society.

What was life like for ordinary people in the 16th century?

High child mortality and a series of terrible harvests across Europe, from 1593 to 1597, produced great uncertainty. It's a time of fear and the margins between comfort and misery are small.

It was also a bitterly disputatious society. Women fight each other a lot; there's lots of punching and scratching. Men hit women too, but fights between men tend to be

more serious, involving swords and a greater risk of death. There's lots of gossip, lots of foul-mouthed insults. Houses provide little privacy from the supervision of others; closing your doors or windows is grounds for suspicion of sexual sin. So it's quite an intimate, claustrophobic society and the frustrations of living on top of each other often lead to violence.

What was the role of religion in this climate of fear and violence?

Fundamentalism, morality police, religious warfare... these things are very much part of our history as Europeans. The 16th century witnessed decades of deadly religious violence in France in response to growing numbers of Protestants, especially in the southwestern region of Languedoc. In the Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572, about 10,000 Protestants were massacred in towns across France. Understandably, many Protestants subsequently converted back to Catholicism.

But across the French south, cities like Montauban, Nîmes and Montpellier adopted a siege mentality, consolidating their town councils, consuls, even courts into Protestant hands. These rebel cities were surrounded by hostile Catholics and their armies. The chief way that Protestants sought to protect themselves from the wrath of God was by adherence to a strict moral code. Moral policing meant safety.



© Nicholas Dawkins

How did formal institutions and informal social norms interact to control behavior?

The Protestants established consistories, a kind of local church court for the imposition of morality. Elders were appointed by the church authorities to police their local streets and report back on any wrongdoing. The slightest indiscretion or impropriety led to a summons. The ultimate sanction was excommunication, casting the evil person out and prohibiting any interaction with the faithful.

There were restrictions on games, gambling, festivals and dancing. The consistories also had an interest in the resolution of fights and quarrels. But they were most concerned with sexual sin ('rolling in the hay' or sex before marriage) and upholding marriage itself.

People often supported the consistory by denouncing their neighbors. There appears to have been a fringe of gossipy

'do-gooders', often women, surrounding the consistory and reporting things. Gossip, which was carefully investigated, served to regulate collective behavior.

Why are the consistorial records of such value?

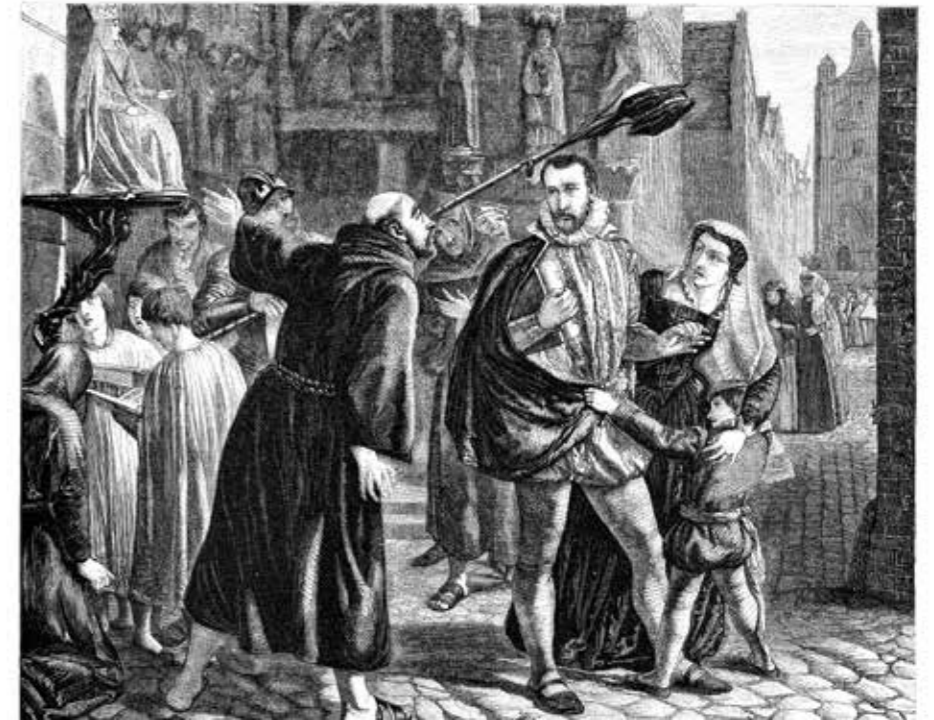
Consistories' interest in controlling morals meant that they were above all interested in controlling women, who were considered the source of sexual sin. Their records offer insights into moments when things went wrong: marital quarrels, illegitimate pregnancies, rape, fights and malicious gossip. These fissures allow us a rare opportunity to see into the lives of ordinary people. Unlike the criminal courts, the consistories were freely accessible to women and the poor, writing down everything they said. It's extraordinary that a maidservant who was raped by her employer could bring a case against him.

You've analyzed 9,000 pages of consistorial records from 1,200 cases. What picture emerges of the women who appeared before the court?

Women of the period – although legally and structurally devoid of power – do appear to have exercised power in a number of ways. They were vocal and violent, inventive and persuasive, resourceful, and hardy. Given that having a child outside marriage risked social stigma and potential financial ruin, it's surprising to find in my research that so many women had sex outside marriage. Equally, given that marriage has been portrayed as women's 'personal horizon', it's astonishing that so many women challenged their engagements.

When is it appropriate to make moral judgments about the past?

We're obviously tempted to make moral judgments when we read about men raping



Religious persecution in 16th-century Paris. In the Bartholomew's Day massacre (1572), about 10,000 Protestants were massacred in towns across France.

their maidservants. Historians have two conflicting jobs: one is to remain as impartial as possible in assessing evidence; the other is to be empathetic with people of the past. Our moral judgment needs to be as capacious and kindly as possible to all participants.

You've said that we're interested in the past because we're interested in ourselves. What does your research tell you about 21st-century women?

As a woman moving from being single to being married during the period of writing, it's been very interesting to write about women in courtship, marriage and disharmony. There are parallels with my own experience, but hopefully not in every regard! I'm a feminist so I have a sense of moral outrage about what these women experienced, and

I inwardly cheer them on when they put two fingers up to society. That's my bias.

Women today continue to collude with patriarchy, and to face endemic problems. There's research that shows that women are much more likely to be published in academic journals if their papers are anonymous. I've received death threats that use graphic, intensely misogynistic language – it seems women who are in the public sphere still have to expect a lot of abuse. ■

FIND OUT MORE

Suzannah's book *The Voices of Nîmes: Women, Sex and Marriage in early modern Languedoc* is due to be published within the next year by Oxford University Press.



Lessons from Syria

• **NELL GABIAM** •
HUMANITARIANISM, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY

Recent events in the Middle East have driven the search for new solutions to longstanding humanitarian problems such as forced migration, and have highlighted new concerns such as urbanization. The Syrian refugee crisis, in particular, says political anthropologist Nell Gabiam, has acted as a laboratory for UN-led attempts to repurpose humanitarianism for the 21st century. Like geographer David Lagarde (featured on the following pages), Nell insists that solutions need to use a long-term perspective, and to emphasize refugees' autonomy and self-reliance.



“While some camps have been built to house refugees from Syria (in Turkey and Jordan), 80 percent of these refugees are living in urban areas, not camps.”

GLOBAL SECURITY

Several of the conclusions in the WHS report were prefigured in the UN's 2015-16 Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan. This plan insists that the response to the Syrian refugee crisis must address not only the needs of refugees fleeing to regional host countries – such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt – but also those of vulnerable people living in the areas to which refugees are fleeing. Development aid is seen by the UN as a stabilizing tool to address “the adverse socio-economic

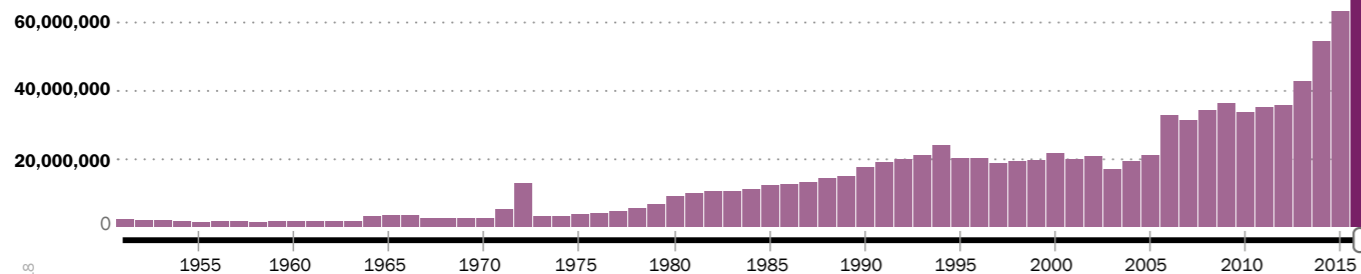
effects” of the Syrian crisis on neighboring host countries. For Antonio Guterres, former head of UNHCR, there is an obvious link between these adverse socio-economic factors and global security, and he has insisted that “refugee-hosting countries are also a first line of defense for all regions troubled by conflict and terrorism”.

With its roots in 19th-century Europeans' fears of the breakdown of their rapidly industrializing societies, the current humanitarian system expanded after the Cold War as states and international organizations became more active in providing relief to victims of conflict and natural disasters. Humanitarian concerns are now increasingly linked to issues of state, regional, and global security.

LONG-TERM IMPACT

In her article ‘Humanitarianism, Development, and Security in the 21st Century: Lessons from the Syrian Refugee Crisis’, Nell notes that rather than using the language of emergency and relief, humanitarian actors are putting increasing emphasis on the long-term welfare of refugees and their impact on host societies. Resilience, sustainability, and self-reliance, terms currently in vogue in the development world, are increasingly being associated with refugees.

A GLOBAL CHALLENGE



The graph above shows the huge rise in UNHCR 'persons of concern' since the Second World War. The figures below represent the breakdown by population type for 2016.

Refugees: 17,187,488	Asylum-seekers: 2,826,508	IDPs: 36,627,127	Returnees: 7,063,374	Stateless persons: 3,242,207	Others: 803,134
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General overview of Zaatarî refugee camp, photographed by IAST researcher David Lagarde. From 2013 onwards, the camp authorities gradually replaced the tents with bungalows offered by international donors (mainly from the Gulf States).

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“The response to the Syrian crisis was shaped by prior and ongoing crises, including the mass displacement of Palestinians and Iraqis”

In the post 9/11 era, countries such as the United States have viewed counterterrorism and humanitarianism as “crime-fighting partners”. Refugee crises were seen as a potential source of regional and global threats such as terrorism, but collectively refugees retained the mantle of victimhood. In the aftermath of the 2015 Paris attacks in which one of the assailants was believed to have travelled to France posing as a Syrian refugee, however, some people in Europe and North America now see Middle Eastern refugees as embodying the threat of global terrorism.

Such amalgamation is unfortunate, Nell tells IAST Connect, and has fueled intolerant and discriminatory attitudes and policies toward refugees emanating from countries like Syria, making it harder for them to find security from the war: “Evidence shows that refugees, regardless of their origin, do not present a significant terrorism risk.¹ Let’s not forget that violence from ISIS, a major concern in Europe and North America when it comes to global terrorism, is a factor in refugees’ flight from Syria. A balanced and effective global security approach needs to acknowledge the links between the security concerns of refugees and broader concerns about the social and political effects of massive forced displacement.”

URBAN SOLUTIONS

Refugees, especially in the Middle East, are increasingly settling in urban centers, giving rise to new concerns and new opportunities. “While some camps have been built to house refugees from Syria (in Jordan and Turkey, for example),” Nell writes in her article, “80 percent of these refugees are living in urban areas, not camps.” She points to research by Dawn Chatty on Iraqi refugees who chose to settle in urban centers rather than camps, precipitating a UNHCR policy shift toward a “more rights-based approach” focused not on confining

refugees to camps, but rather on helping them while working with local communities. This approach was later used in Libya and Tunisia during the Arab uprisings.

Rapid and unplanned urbanization, the WHS report argues, puts enormous strain on infrastructure and can exacerbate people’s vulnerability to crisis. At the same time, the report finds that urban centers offer opportunities for recovery and recommends promoting employment and self-reliance rather than camps. Both Jordan and Turkey appear to be moving away from encampment and toward granting Syrian refugees rights to employment and education.

A NEW APPROACH

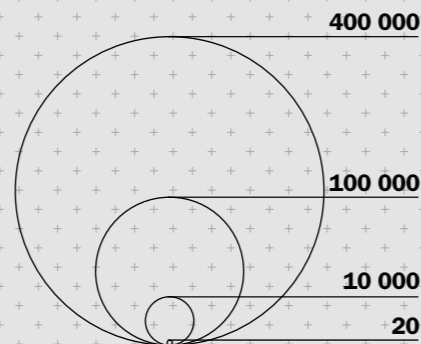
Despite its undoubted impact on humanitarian strategies, Nell points out that the response to the Syrian crisis was itself shaped by prior — and ongoing — crises, including the mass displacement of Palestinians and Iraqis. For a long time, the protracted exile of Palestinians was the exception. Such protracted refugee crises have now become more common, driving the need for a new approach that not only emphasizes migrants’ long-term resilience but also re-evaluates the merits of encampment and recognizes refugees’ right to the city.

¹See ‘Terrorism and Immigration: A Risk Analysis’ (2016) by Alex Nowrasteh, Cato Institute.

Where are the Syrian war refugees?

IN THE 28 MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Germany and Sweden alone are home to 70% of Syrian refugees residing in Europe.



IN THE FOUR NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

In June 2016, 5.5 million Syrians were living in exile worldwide. 4.6 million of them were hosted in one of the four neighboring countries



Lines in the sand

• DAVID LAGARDE • MAPPING MIGRATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

From open doors to barbed wire, the impact of national responses to refugee crises remains poorly understood. How do such diverse policies influence migrants' access to resources, coping strategies and itineraries? Drawing on his previous work as a cartographer, David Lagarde is analyzing the role of social networks in Syrian refugees' journeys to and from Jordan. As well as offering powerful visualizations of the conditions of movement at different spatial scales, his research shows how today's migratory paths are shaped by cross-border trade going back as far as the Ottoman era.



"Refugee movements are often influenced by previous migration flows and networks that are re-mobilized during a humanitarian crisis"

While a growing literature focuses on the role of social networks in migrants' decision-making and settlement in host societies, few studies have questioned their influence on itineraries. And even though most refugees stay in their region of origin, scant research has been devoted to forced migration in regions beyond Europe and North America.

Lebanon and Jordan. Fighting in Syria disrupted this trade, so from 2012 onwards a growing number of traders moved to northern Jordan on a more permanent basis. Their wives and children soon joined them as the Syrian regime increased its bombing of the Deir Mqaren area.

David's fieldwork shows that the social networks that Syrian asylum seekers relied on to access resources (such as transportation, border crossing, information about employment, housing, and healthcare), were directly affected by the progressive closure of Jordanian borders, together

CLOSED GATES

At the start of the summer of 2014, the UN estimated that around three million people had fled the Syrian conflict, mainly to Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Faced with this population influx and fear of the jihadist threat, in June 2014 Jordan decided to close and increase surveillance of its border with Syria. Since then, only a few dozen Syrians a day have been allowed to enter the country.

Based on cross-interviews conducted from 2014 to 2015 in northern Jordan, David has reconstructed life migration histories for 24 people from the Syrian village of Deir Mqaren. His case studies illustrate the impact of the closure of the Jordanian borders and the changing characteristics of social ties migrants relied on to circumvent the new border regulations.

FLEEING VIOLENCE

Before the Syrian conflict, the main source of income for Deir Mqaren villagers was from dried fruits, nuts and 'traditional' sweet products, bought in Damascus and sold in



Premises of the international organizations involved in the Zaatari camp are surrounded by fences topped with barbed wire; the humanitarian area clearly stands out from the refugee one.

with the government's encampment policy. Increasingly, migrants were forced to rely on weaker ties.

These security measures also ultimately modified migrants' itineraries into the Hashemite kingdom. They became more dependent on migration management professionals (such as the International Organization for Migration, UNHCR, Jordanian border guards, and NGOs) as well as on smugglers, with profound impacts on migratory itineraries and coping strategies.

LONG-TERM MOBILITY

While most studies on Syrian migration focus only on the post-2011 refugee crisis, David argues that a continuum exists between what is considered voluntary migration, before 2011, and the current forced migration. "Refugee movements resulting from conflicts are often influenced by previous migration flows and correlated networks that

are re-mobilized during a humanitarian crisis. Mapping long-term mobility can help better understand the current forced migration processes and their connections with commercial and family strategies and other forms of social organization built over time."

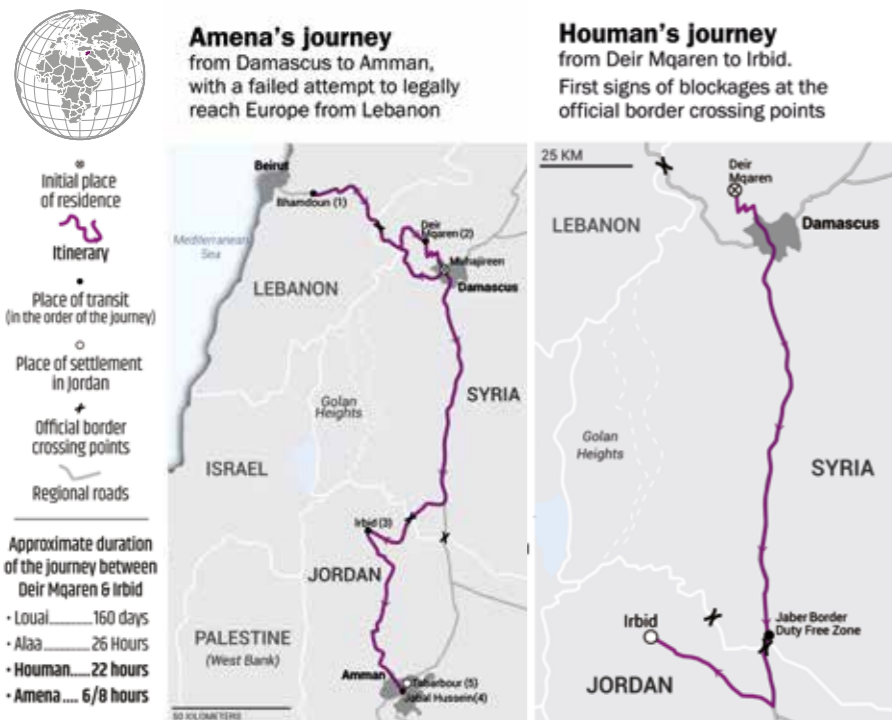
"Information circulates rapidly within networks, with telephone numbers of 'reliable' people smugglers exchanged between relations and friends"

As Jordan's attitude toward Syrian refugees began to harden in 2014, and following a significant reduction in refugee aid from foreign governments, an increasing number of Syrians chose to continue their journey to more distant destinations, particularly Germany.

The overwhelming majority of refugees were forced to turn to 'illegal' channels. Migratory channels to Europe from Jordan soon ran alongside routes operated by networks of seasoned 'people smugglers'. "Information circulates rapidly within the networks, with the telephone numbers of 'reliable' people smugglers being exchanged between relations and friends," says David. "In the space of just a few months, as demand increased so the price of the journey from Turkey to Greece dropped considerably."

WELCOME TO GERMANY

Thanks to remote communication tools like Whatsapp and Facebook, David has kept in contact with some of the refugees he interviewed in Jordan. In July 2016, he travelled to Dortmund in Germany, to find out more about the new lives of a family from Deir Mqaren, using participant observation methods. The idea is to shed new light on the settling of a population from a rural area in an urban environment.



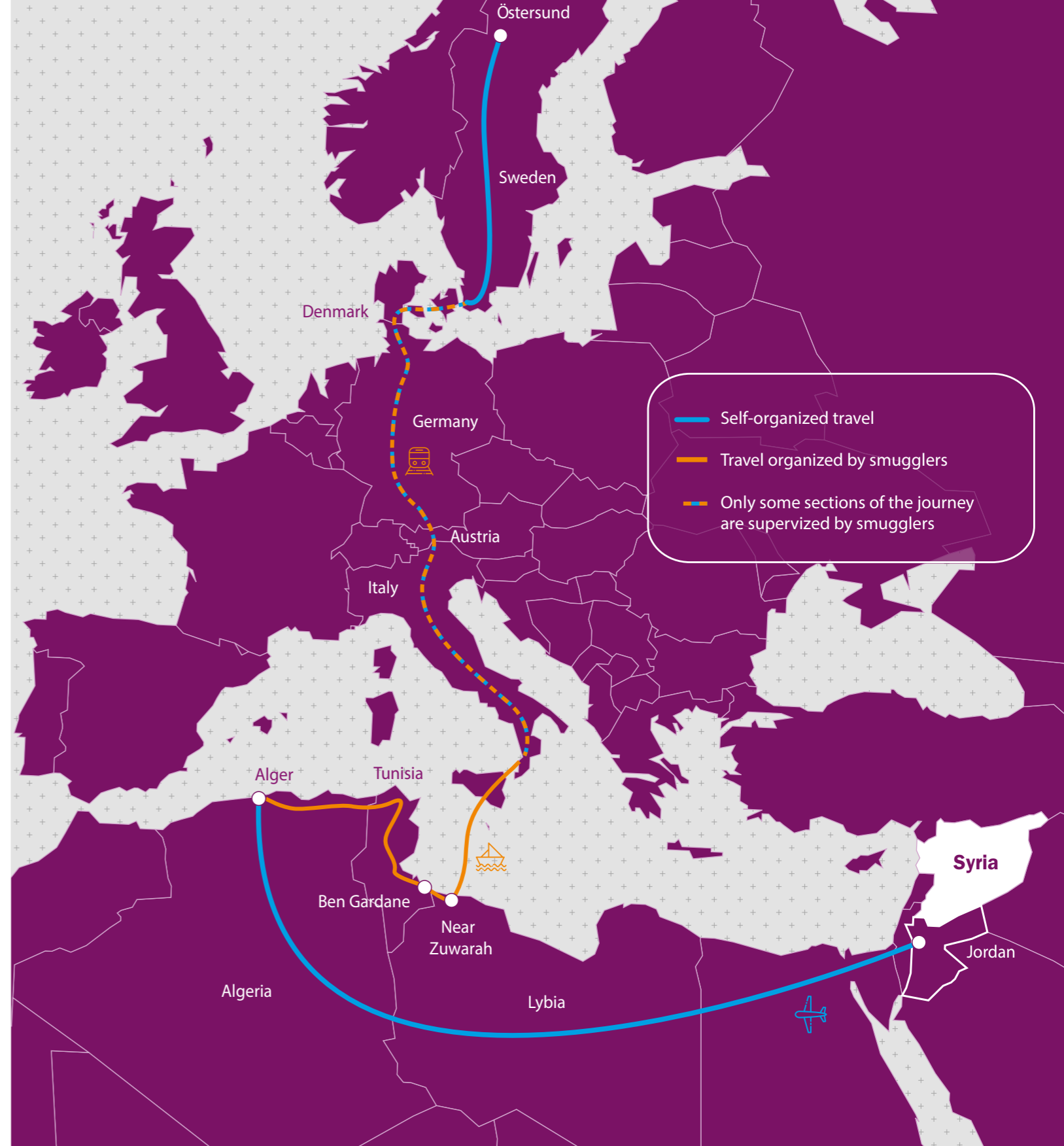
FIND OUT MORE

Nell is a visitor to IAST from Iowa State University. A significant part of her ethnographic research, including her book *The Politics of Suffering* (2016), is focused on the tensions surrounding urban planning in Palestinian refugee camps. She is currently conducting research on Palestinians who have been displaced by the war in Syria and have sought refuge in other parts of the Middle East and in Europe.

David is a Phd candidate in geography at Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire Solidarités, Sociétés, territoires, UT2. Co-authored with Kamel Dorai, his paper 'Host state policies and the changing role of social networks for Syrian refugees in Jordan' (2016) is published in *Espace, Populations, Sociétés*.

WASSIM AND MAHER'S PERILOUS JOURNEY ACROSS EUROPE, FROM AMMAN TO SWEDEN

between August 14th and mid-September 2014



What price for a good politician?

• MICHAEL BECHER •
TRADE-OFFS IN ELECTORAL REFORM

Recent political upheaval in the US, Europe and beyond has prompted calls for politicians and political institutions to 'reconnect' with voters. But research by Michael Becher, IAST program director for political science, suggests that designing more representative electoral systems may come at the cost of undermining the selection of honest, competent politicians.

Is there an ideal electoral system?

MB: Ideally, electoral systems help to select high-quality policymakers that are responsive to the interests of the electorate. The responsiveness of politicians to citizens is a defining feature in many normative accounts of democracy. Beyond direct policy responsiveness, the selection of high-quality politicians is conducive to making public policies in the broader public interest, by reducing rent-seeking or increasing competence.

“Electoral geography is the Achilles’ heel of political representation in majoritarian, ‘first past the post’ electoral systems”

From the ‘rotten boroughs’ of 19th-century England to the gerrymandering of US congressional districts, why have geographic distortions proved so difficult to eradicate?

MB: At least since debates in 19th-century Europe, it has been clear that electoral geography is the Achilles’ heel of political representation in majoritarian, ‘first past the post’ electoral systems such as those of the US and Britain. Despite nominal universal suffrage, the unequal distribution of voters across electoral districts can lead to a large disproportionality between votes and seats. In turn, this seats-votes disproportionality

may translate to the enactment of policies that deviate considerably from the interests of the average voter. A famous example is the concentration of working-class voters in urban and industrial areas, where left-wing parties may be overwhelmingly victorious but cannot use their excess votes to win seats elsewhere.

What opportunities does electoral reform offer for improving representation?

MB: Generations of scholars have examined the effect of electoral systems on political representation. Mill (1861) and many others have championed the idea that proportional representation (PR) improves government responsiveness to broader segments of the electorate. Research in comparative politics finds that PR systems avoid or at least mitigate the problem of geographical biases in the translation of votes to seats.

You have written a paper with IAST’s Irene Menendez Gonzalez, entitled ‘Electoral Reform and Trade-Offs in Representation’. How does your research contribute to this debate?

MB: We analyze the effect of electoral institutions on two important features of representation that are often studied separately: policy responsiveness and the quality of legislators. To do so, we develop a simple game-theory model. It captures that politicians vary in their ideology as well as their quality. In the model, political polarization among citizens undermines the selection of good politicians because party elites exploit

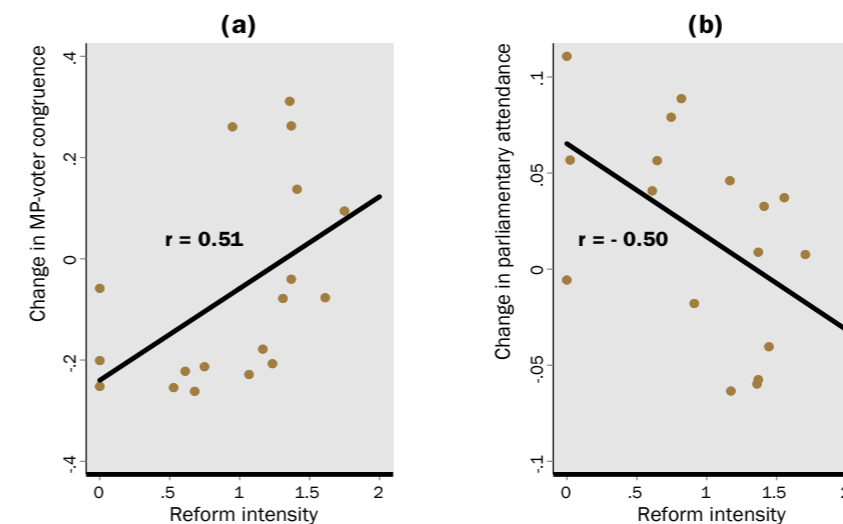


voters’ trade-off between policy and quality. While this problem exists under different electoral institutions, the problem can be more severe under PR. At the same time, proportional electoral systems are better at dealing with geographic distortions. Hence, there is a trade-off. In the context of political polarization, the key prediction is that increasing the proportionality of the electoral system improves politicians’ policy responsiveness and reduces their quality.

How do you test for this?

MB: The design of electoral institutions is itself a political choice, so drawing valid conclusions about their effects from observational data is difficult. Our empirical analysis tries to overcome this problem by focusing on the introduction of PR to early 20th-century Zurich. This unique case allows us to test our argument in an unusually controlled fashion. First, the electoral reform was not bundled with other institutional changes. Second, it was introduced from below by a referendum against the incumbent parliamentary majority, generating municipality-level data on voter preferences for institutional change. Third, the intensity of the reform varied based on pre-determined administrative

ELECTORAL REFORM IN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY ZURICH



Correlation between the intensity of the electoral reform across districts and two different aspects of political representation: Panel (a) focuses on the policy congruence between members of parliament and the median voter, panel (b) on members’ parliamentary attendance. Consistent with the trade-off identified in the theoretical model, a higher dosage of PR is related to more policy responsiveness but less parliamentary effort. Data from the introduction of PR in the Swiss canton of Zurich in 1917

constraints, creating plausible treatment and control groups. Finally, the institutional setting generates micro-level data on the congruence between legislators and voters, drawn from legislative and popular votes on the same policy.

Our empirical results indicate that the intensity of the electoral reform increases the congruence between legislators’ votes in parliament and the cantonal median voter. However, higher reform intensity decreases the selection of more intrinsically motivated MPs that exert higher legislative effort, as measured by parliamentary attendance and speeches. Consistent with our theory, the findings underscore the existence of a crucial

trade-off embedded in the design of electoral systems.

How might your findings help design better electoral systems?

MB: The idea that there are trade-offs in the design of political institutions is far from new. But this particular trade-off has been neglected by previous research, and we think it may be relevant to political reformers and policymakers around the world. Our empirical study focuses on a particular case to get some clean estimates of the causal effect of electoral reform. More work needs to be done in other contexts to further assess the logic of the argument. ■

FIND OUT MORE

Michael studies comparative politics and political economy with a special focus on institutions, inequality and redistribution. Irene studies political economy and development, with a special focus on international trade and public policies.

Read their research at www.iast.fr

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